

Title	<International Research Center for Elements Science>Organotransition Metal Chemistry
Author(s)	
Citation	ICR annual report (2013), 20: 56-57
Issue Date	2013
URL	<a href="http://hdl.handle.net/2433/185240">http://hdl.handle.net/2433/185240</a>
Right	
Type	Article
Textversion	publisher

# International Research Center for Elements Science – Organotransition Metal Chemistry –

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## Scope of Research

This laboratory aims at establishment of new synthetic methodologies and new functional materials by designing well-defined catalysts based on transition metal chemistry. New concepts and ideas of molecular-based catalysts are accumulated by mechanistic investigations using experimental methods such as spectroscopy and kinetic techniques as well as theoretical methods. The research subjects include: (1) development of novel organotransition metal systems for catalysis based on precise ligand design, and (2) preparation of  $\pi$ -conjugated polymers by using direct arylation.

### KEYWORDS

Transition Metal Complex  
Homogeneous Catalyst  
Reaction Mechanism  
Low-coordinate Phosphorus Ligand  
 $\pi$ -Conjugated Polymer



## Selected Publications

Chang, Y.-H.; Nakajima, Y.; Tanaka, H.; Yoshizawa, K.; Ozawa, F., Facile N-H Bond Cleavage of Ammonia by an Iridium Complex Bearing a Non-innocent PNP-Pincer Type Phosphaalkene Ligand, *J. Am. Chem. Soc.*, **135**, 11791-11794 (2013).

Wakioka, M.; Nakamura, Y.; Hihara, Y.; Ozawa, F.; Sakaki, S., Factors Controlling the Reactivity of Heteroarenes in Direct Arylation with Arylpalladium Acetate Complexes, *Organometallics*, **32**, 4423-4430 (2013).

Nakajima, Y.; Okamoto, Y.; Chang, Y.-H.; Ozawa, F., Synthesis, Structures, and Reactivity of Ruthenium Complexes with PNP-pincer Type Phosphaalkene Ligands, *Organometallics*, **32**, 2918-2925 (2013).

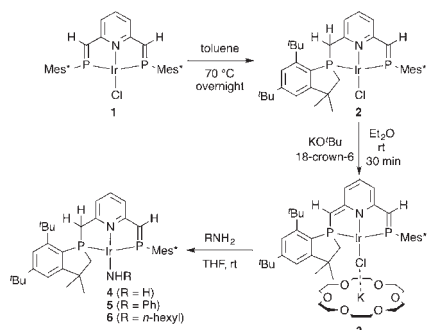
Chang, Y.-H.; Nakajima, Y.; Ozawa, F., A Bis(phosphaethenyl)pyridine Complex of Iridium(I): Synthesis and Catalytic Application to N-Alkylation of Amines with Alcohols, *Organometallics*, **32**, 2210-2215 (2013).

Wakioka, M.; Kitano, Y.; Ozawa, F., A Highly Efficient Catalytic System for Polycondensation of 2,7-Dibromo-9,9-dioctylfluorene and 1,2,4,5-Tetrafluorobenzene via Direct Arylation, *Macromolecules*, **46**, 370-374 (2013).

## N–H Bond Cleavage of Ammonia by an Iridium Complex Bearing a Non-innocent PNP-Pincer Type Phosphaalkene Ligand

Late transition metal complexes with a pyridine-based PNP-pincer ligand have attracted a great deal of attention owing to their facile cleavage of non-activated bonds via non-innocent behavior of the ligand. Herein, we describe the synthesis and reactions of novel iridium complex **3** with an unsymmetrical PNP-pincer ligand composed of a dearomatized pyridine core and benzophospholanylmethyl and phosphaaethenyl arms at the 2,6-positions, which was prepared in two steps from [IrCl(BPEP)] (**1**, BPEP = 2,6-bis[2-(2,4,6-tri-*tert*-butylphenyl)-2-phosphaethenyl]-pyridine) (Scheme 1).

Phosphaalkenes with a P=C bond possess an extremely low-lying  $\pi^*$  orbital around the phosphorus atom, and thus exhibit strong  $\pi$ -accepting ability toward transition metals. Reflecting this particular ligand property of phosphaalkene, complex **3** undergoes extended  $\pi$ -conjugation over the molecule, and exhibits extremely high reactivity toward N–H bond cleavage of ammonia and amines to afford the corresponding amido complexes **4–6** in quantitative yields (Scheme 1).

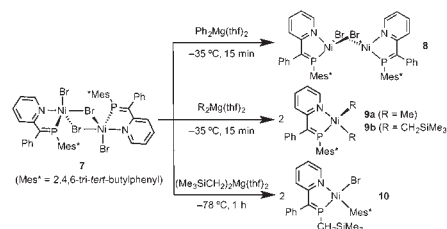


**Scheme 1.** Synthesis of **3** and its reactivity toward ammonia and amines.

## Synthesis of Phosphaethenylpyridine-Ni Complex and Its Reactivity toward Organomagnesium Reagents

Recently, we have demonstrated that phosphaalkene ligand successfully stabilizes low oxidation state complexes like a Fe(I) aryl mesityl complex. In this study, we report the synthesis of novel phosphaalkene–Ni complex [NiBr<sub>2</sub>(pep)]<sub>2</sub> (**7**) (PEP = 2-(1-phenyl-2-phosphaethenyl)pyridine) and its unique reactivity toward organomagnesium reagents. Complex **7** was synthesized by the reaction of PEP with [NiBr<sub>2</sub>(dme)] (dme = 1,2-dimethoxyethane) in benzene at 60 °C. The reaction of **7** with Ph<sub>2</sub>Mg(thf)<sub>2</sub> affords an one-electron

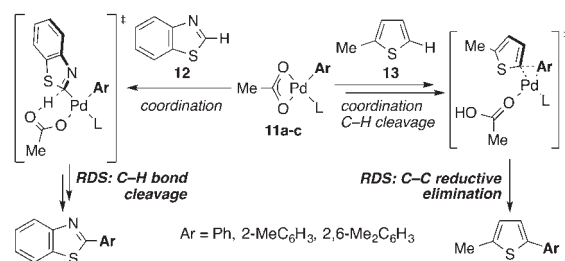
reduction product, bromine-bridged Ni(I) dimer **8**. Additionally, dialkylmagnesiums (R<sub>2</sub>Mg(thf)<sub>2</sub>; R = Me, CH<sub>2</sub>SiMe<sub>3</sub>) also reacted with **7** at –35 °C to give dialkyl Ni(II) complexes **9** and **10**. However, the reaction of dialkylmagnesiums at –78 °C did not give monoalkyl complexes but gave monoaryl complexes **10** with exchange of the alkyl and Mes\* groups. These results indicate that the exchange of the alkyl and Mes\* groups would occur on a high-valent Ni complex intermediate.



**Scheme 2.** Reactivity of **7** toward organomagnesium reagents.

## Factors Controlling the Reactivity of Heteroarenes in Direct Arylation with Arylpalladium Acetate Complexes

The palladium-catalyzed direct arylation of heteroarenes with aryl halides has emerged as a viable alternative to conventional cross-coupling reactions. We report a detailed mechanistic study on factors controlling the reactivity of heteroarenes in direct arylation with well-defined models of the presumed intermediate [PdAr(O<sub>2</sub>CMe- $\kappa^2$ O) L] (**11a–c**, Ar = Ph, 2-MeC<sub>6</sub>H<sub>3</sub>, 2,6-Me<sub>2</sub>C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>3</sub>). The reactivity order of heteroarenes was evaluated by competitive reactions, showing that benzothiazole (**12**, pK<sub>a</sub> = 27) is significantly less reactive than 2-methylthiophene (**13**, pK<sub>a</sub> = 42). The reaction of **13** obeyed simple second-order kinetics, and the deuterium-labeling experiments and DFT calculations indicated the occurrence of rate-determining reductive elimination. On the other hand, the reaction of **12** displayed saturation kinetics due to the occurrence of relatively stable coordination of **12** prior to C–H bond cleavage. This coordination stability enhances the activation barrier for C–H bond cleavage, thereby causing the modest reactivity of **12**.



**Scheme 3.** Reaction of **11a–c** with heteroarenes **12** and **13**.